

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 IGA-02 A-01 OPR-02
SY-05 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /101 W
-----060248Z 012998 /20

R 050915Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7431
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN
CINCEUR

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, SS, MR, MO, AG
SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: SNIM COMMUNIQUE CONCERNING POLISARIO STRIKE AT
ZOUERATE

REF: (A) NOUAKCHOTT 985, (B) NOUAKCHOTT 1026

1. IN ABSENCE ANY OFFICIAL MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT (GIRM) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MAY 1 POLISARIO ATTACK ON ZOUERATE AND MINING FACILITIES REPORTED REFTELS, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SOCIETE NATIONALE INDUSTRIELLE ET MINIERE (SNIM), GIRM INDUSTRIAL HOLDING COMPANY, ISSUED FOLLOWING COMMUNIQUE APPARENTLY IN AN EFFORT TO CALM
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FRENCH EMPLOYEES REMAINING AT MINING SITE. SNIM DIRGEN RELEASED COMMUNIQUE EARLY EVENING MAY 2, APPROXIMATELY 36 HOURS AFTER ZOUERATE ATTACK, IN ORDEG TO MAKE EARLY EVENING NEWSCAST ON RADIO MAURITANIA AND FOLLOWING MORNING EDITION OF GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED DAILY NEWSPAPER "CHAAB". DIREGEN PHONED BOTH DIRECTOR OF RADIO MAURITANIE AND DIRGEN OF "CHAAB" WITH PERSONAL REQUEST THAT COMMUNIQUE RECEIVE

BROAD COVERAGE. DIRGEN OF "CHAAB" AND DIRECTOR OF RADIO STATION CHECKED INDEPENDENTLY WITH GIRM MINISTER OF INFORMATION WHO, IN ACCORDANCE WITH LONGSTANDING GIRM POLICY, HAD SAID THAT SNIM COMMUNIQUE COULD NOT BE PUBLICLY DISSEMINATED IN MAURITANIA. (SINCE BEGINNING OF SAHARA WAR, GIRM POLICY HAS BEEN TO REFRAIN FROM COMMENTING ON OR EVEN ACKNOWLEDGING, BATTLEFIELD CLASHES WITH POLISARIO.) WHEN SNIM DIRGEN LEARNED OF DECISION, HE CALLED IN LOCAL AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE REPRESENTATIVE, HANDED HIM COMMUNIQUE, AND ENCOURAGED AFP REPRESENTATIVE TO MOVE IT OVER AFP WIRE ASAP TO PARIS. AFP REPRESENTATIVE REPORTEDLY WAS DELIGHTED TO OBLIGE. SINCE AFP IS NOT FORMALLY CENSORED LOCALLY, WE ASSUME COMMUNIQUE ARRIVED IN PARIS MORNING OF MAY 3.

2. INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION SNIM COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWS:
BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED:

NOUAKCHOTT, MAY 2, 1977: THE BOARD OF SNIM CONFIRMS THAT THE MINING SITE OF ZOUEATE UNDERWENT AN ARMED ATTACK ON THE NIGHT OF SATURDAY/SUNDAY MAY 1, THE PURPOSE OF WHICH WAS TO CREATE A PSYCHOLOGY OF FEAR WITHIN THE PERSONNEL OF THE MINE, PARTICULARLY THE EXPATRIATE PERSONNEL. WE DEPLORE THE THREE DEATHS, TWO OF WHICH WERE EXPATRIATE, AND THE TEN DISAPPEARANCES, SIX OF WHICH WERE EXPATRIATE.

THOSE EXPATRIATES WHO EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO DO SO HAVE BEEN REPATRIATED TO THEIR NATIVE COUNTRIES AND WILL WAIT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THERE.

THE PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FUEL DEPOT, WAS NOT HARMED.

NEW PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR THE MINING INSTALLATIONS AND THE MINE SITE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING INSTALLED. THE MINE WILL GRADUALLY RECOMMENCE ACTIVITY AND SHOULD ACHIEVE NORMAL OPERATIONS (PRODUCTION) WITHIN A PERIOD OF TWO TO THREE WEEKS, ONCE THE NEW PROTECTIVE MEASURES ARE IN PLACE.

THE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE CURRENT COMMERCIAL COMMITMENTS OF SNIM DUE TO THE STOCKS OF COMMERCIAL ORE AVAILABLE AT THE ORE PORT OF NOUADHIBOU.

ISMAEL OULD AMAR, DIRECTOR GENERAL. END UNCLASSIFIED.

HANDYSIDE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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